

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ERDA-05 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07

IO-10 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-02 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04 PRS-01

SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /083 W
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3536

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USNMR SHAPE

CINC EUR VAIHINGEN

S E C R E T BONN 16654

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR: RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS ISSUE

REF: (A) LONDON 15556 DTG 091059Z OCT 75

(B) USNATO 5481 DTG 081620Z OCT 75

(C) MBFR VIENNA 438 DTG 031656Z OCT 75

1. WE WOULD LIKE TO COMMENT ON THE RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS ISSUE AS SEEN FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE IN BONN. WE HAVE READ WITH INTEREST THE REFTELS ON THIS SUBJECT AND OFFER OUR ANALYSIS OF WHAT THE FRG MIGHT DO SHOULD THE US CHANGE ITS POSITION.

2. AS ADDRESSEES ARE WELL AWARE, THE ISSUE OF EQUIPMENT CONSTRAINTS IS A "BETE NOIRE" TO THE GERMANS. DURING CONVERSATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR ROTH AND FRED RUTH IN SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, FRG CONCERN ABOUT NON-SECRET

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US EQUIPMENT CONSTRAINTS HAS BEEN A CONSTANTLY

REPEATED THEME. THE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE SOVIET DEMANDS IN VIENNA FOR EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT RESTRAINTS HAUNTS THE GERMANS. IF THIS SPECTRE COULD BE EXORCISED EVEN BEFORE IT MATERIALIZED, THE GERMANS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE RELIEVED.

3. AS REF B POINTS OUT, THE FRG IS MAINTAINING A BRACKET IN THE DRAFT GUIDANCE ON THE RECIPROCAL CEILINGS ISSUE. THIS IS ANOTHER CLEAR INDICATION OF THE FRG PERCEPTION OF THE LINK BETWEEN LIMITS ON US TANKS WHICH WOULD LEAD INEXORABLY TO DEMANDS FOR EUROPEAN EQUIPMENT LIMITATIONS BY THE SOVIETS.

4. WE NOTE FROM REF A THAT THE UK WOULD PROBABLY NOT OBJECT TO DROPPING THE RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS CONCEPT. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT JUDGMENT FROM THE GERMAN STAND-POINT, SINCE THE FRG HAS SUPPORTED THE UK ARGUMENT THAT RECIPROCAL RESTRAINTS ARE NECESSARY IF ONLY FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS. IF THE BRITS ARE WILLING TO FALL OFF THIS POSITION, WE BELIEVE THE FRG WOULD NOT BE FAR BEHIND.

5. OF THE TWO ALTERNATIVES PRESENTED IN PARA 6, REF B, I.E., SEEK TO DEFINE "IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO UNDERMINE THE BASIS OF THE AGREEMENT" OR DELETE THE LANGUAGE, WE BELIEVE THE LATTER COURSE OF ACTION WOULD BE PREFERABLE AS FAR AS THE GERMANS ARE CONCERNED. IN OUR JUDGMENT, THE FRG WOULD-- -- WITH RELATIVE EASE-- -- ACCEPT A CHANGED US POSITION CALLING FOR DELETION OF THE RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS LANGUAGE FROM THE DRAFT GUIDANCE.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, BALANCED FORCE REDUCTIONS, NUCLEAR WEAPONS, TANKS (COMBAT VEHICLES), NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BONN16654
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750352-0968
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751063/aaaacdux.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ACDA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 LONDON 15556
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 APR 2003 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <25 SEP 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: RECIPROCAL LIMITATIONS ISSUE
TAGS: PARM, GE, UK, UR, NATO, MBFR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006